



GUADALUPE MOUNTAINS NATIONAL PARK

General Management Plan Newsletter

April 2000

Dear Park Friends, Neighbors and Visitors

As the new Superintendent at Guadalupe Mountains National Park, I would like to personally invite you to take part in the development of a new plan for the future of the park.

Guadalupe Mountains National Park was authorized by Congress in 1966 and formally established in 1972. The park includes outstanding geological, scenic, natural and cultural resources of national and international significance that are visited by over two hundred thousand people a year. A master plan for managing and developing the park was originally completed in 1976 and needs to be updated to address current conditions including expanded park lands on the western boundary, advancements in science and resource management, and evolving patterns of public use. The new plan, called a general management plan (GMP), will help park management respond to management issues by establishing a set of guiding principles including the park's purpose, significance and goals. With these guiding principles and priorities in place, the park can more effectively focus on providing protection for resources and public use facilities and services. In association with the GMP, the park will develop an environmental impact statement (EIS) that will assess the environmental, social and economic impacts of all planning alternatives in the GMP. The final document will be referred to as a GMP/EIS.

The development of the plan is intended to be an open exchange of information, issues and ideas about park management among National Park Service staff, park neighbors, government agencies, and the interested public. To reflect the broad range of experience and knowledge we seek, we need your help and involvement. The park has scheduled a series of information meetings for the public to become acquainted with the planning process and help define issues that should be addressed in the plan. The public information meetings will be held on the following dates at the indicated locations:

Monday, April 17th , 7:00pm — Van Horn - Van Horn Convention Center

Tuesday, April 18th , 7: 00pm — Midland/Odessa - Holiday Inn Centre (on East Loop 20)

Thursday, April 20th , 7: 00pm — Queen - Volunteer Fire Station

Monday, April 24th, 7: 00pm — Dell City — Community Building

Tuesday, April 25th, 7: 00pm — Carlsbad — Pecos River Village Conference Center

Wednesday, April 26th , 7: 00pm — El Paso - University of Texas-El Paso, Student Union (Thomas Rivera Conference Center)

This newsletter presents some of our initial ideas about the framework for the planning process including proposed statements of park purpose, significance, and goals and references some of the management issues and concerns that must be addressed in the plan. These are all presented for your evaluation and comment. You will find a response card inside this newsletter that you can complete and mail back, or can bring to the public information meetings for discussion. You can also visit our website: www.nps.gov/gumo/gumo, or drop us an email at: gumo_superintendent@nps.gov.

I look forward to working with you in the coming months as we chart a constructive course for the management of the park in consideration of our shared interests.

Sincerely,

Ellis Richard
Superintendent

WHY WAS THE PARK ESTABLISHED?

- 1 To preserve an area possessing globally-unique geological features together with scenic, natural, and cultural values of great significance.
- 2 To manage a designated wilderness area where the earth and its community of life are untrammeled, and where humans are visitors who do not remain.
- 3 To provide opportunities for visitors to understand, enjoy, appreciate, and experience the unique nature of the park.
- 4 To provide educational and research opportunities that enhance stewardship and wider understanding of the park's resources.



WHY ARE THE RESOURCES SIGNIFICANT?

- 1 Guadalupe Mountains National Park contains the world's most extensive well-exposed fossil reef, related shelf and basinal rocks, and has international designation as the world's best example of Middle Permian geology.
 - a) A tremendous earth fault on the west side of the park attracts major geological interest because it exposes numerous classical depositional settings superimposed over a long interval of geologic time.
 - b) The western area of the park contains excellent examples of playa depositional systems, including evaporite minerals, salt lake shorelines, and areas of aeolian dunes.
- 2 Stark contrasts between mountains and desert, over whelming vistas stretching as far as the eye can see, brilliant fall colors created by the unusually plentiful vegetation, deep rock-ribbed canyons and sparkling white dunes contribute to the extraordinary scenic beauty of the Guadalupe.
- 3 Guadalupe Mountains National Park is an island within an arid sea where an interface of Chihuahuan Desert, Rocky Mountain, and Great Plains flora and fauna was isolated by environmental changes. It contains relict and endemic montane, canyon, and aquatic species in a delicate balance created by elements of physical geography, latitude, climate, and hydrology.



- 4 The cultural resources of the park reflect the pre-history and history of people in the Guadalupe, characterized by spiritual connections and adaptations to a demanding and dynamic environment.
- 5 The park's natural and cultural resources are of great importance to research in a variety of disciplines.

WHAT GOALS SHOULD GUIDE PARK MANAGEMENT? [REDACTED]

Preserve Park Resources

- 1. The ecological balance and biodiversity of the park’s natural resources are protected, restored, and maintained.
- 2. The park’s significant cultural resources are preserved, stabilized, and protected.
- 3. The non-renewable, geological and paleontological resources are protected, conserved and maintained.
- 4. The park’s designated wilderness and all other identified backcountry lands will be managed and maintained as wilderness.
- 5. Management decisions and interpretation are based on sound research, scientific information, resource databases and currently accepted practices.
- 6. Scenic vistas from within and outside the park boundaries are protected from significant intrusions.

Provide for the Public Enjoyment and Visitor Experience of Parks

- 1. Guadalupe Mountains National Park visitors will have the opportunity to learn the information necessary for a safe, enjoyable visit and to gain an understanding and appreciation of the park’s cultural and natural resources.
- 2. Guadalupe Mountains National Park visitors will experience appropriate facilities, services, and recreational opportunities that meet their needs, regardless of length of stay.

Ensure Organizational Effectiveness

- 1. The work environment promotes employee development, productivity, creativity, trust, safety and well being. The park staff works together as efficient teams to achieve park goals and objectives.
- 2. The infrastructure, and human and fiscal resources are identified and acquired to adequately operate, maintain, and protect the park.
- 3. Cooperative relationships and partnerships with surrounding local communities, agencies and organizations support mutual goals and meet human resource needs without compromising resource integrity.
- 4. Park shareholders, partners, cooperators, and neighbors contribute to the decision-making process that guides effective management of the park’s resources.
- 5. Guadalupe Mountains National Park is an effective partner in the stewardship of natural and cultural resources beyond the park’s boundaries.

HOW LONG WILL THE PLAN TAKE TO PRODUCE? [REDACTED]

The development of the GMP will take approximately two years to complete. During that time, the park will collect information, analyze data, write the draft document, circulate this draft for review by the public and government agencies, and after evaluating and incorporating review comments, finalize the GMP/EIS. The planning schedule is as follows:

Project Initiation, Scoping and Data Collection	January '00 - May '00
Data Analysis and Evaluation	May '00 - July '00
Development of Draft Alternatives	July '00 - January '01
Prepare Draft GMP/EIS	January '01 - June '01
Prepare Final GMP/EIS	June '01 - November '01

